

John Esvelt

Chief Risk Officer



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Overview

As Chief Risk Officer for Dentons' Canada Region, John Esvelt holds a cross-functional role responsible for regulatory compliance, risk management and business technology. John is the Firm's most senior officer overseeing risk management in Canada, providing legal counsel to the Board and managing the Office of the General Counsel. John also leverages his experience as General Counsel of Dentons' Canada Region, a role he held for almost a decade, and his extensive background in IT and artificial intelligence in his leadership role.

John's strategic leadership and commitment to legal service excellence drives the evolution of the Firm's internal operations and technology solutions that ultimately are supporting Dentons' efforts to help clients to grow, protect, operate and finance their businesses. John's role ensures all members of the Firm can provide market-differentiating client service excellence while meeting the Firm's legal obligations, managing technology and cybersecurity risks and supporting commitments to regulatory bodies.

John's background in law, technology and risk allows him to drive compliance and technology best practice while showcasing his passion for problem-solving, strategic planning and technology-led solutions. He is acutely aware of the demands of lawyers and the expectations of clients building on his dynamic career as a civil litigation lawyer, law firm administrator, IT Director, General Counsel, Dentons' National Director of Risk Management and most recently, as Dentons' Chief Practice Officer and Chief Canada Legal Officer. As part of his role, John sits on Dentons' National Management Committee, Global Risk Management Committee, Global Sustainability Committee, and the Canada Region Board's Risk Committee.

Through his skilled ability to mesh the business of law with business administration, and his vision to align the business of law with client-facing technology solutions, he helped establish Dentons' Practice Support and Optimization team, an innovative group dedicated to leveraging industry-leading processes and technology for client work. John is a sought-after speaker on many topics, including law firm management, enterprise risk management, ethics and fiduciary duties for lawyers, and conflict resolution through diplomacy and negotiation.

Activities and Affiliations

- Member, Canadian Bar Association

- Member, Ontario Bar Association
- Member, Corporate Legal Operations Consortium
- Member, Advocates' Society
- Member, Automotive Parts Manufacturing Association's Cybersecurity Committee

Presentations

- Co-Speaker, "NALP Talk: Alternative Career Paths in Law," NALP End-of-Year Canadian Section Meeting, December 3, 2019
- Panelist, "From Innovation to Implementation: How Knowledge Management Leaders are Reinventing Law Firms," Ark Group Knowledge Management in the Legal Profession, New York, Oct 22- 23, 2019
- Panelist, "The Future of Law Firms," Western Legal Innovation Forum, Calgary, April 16, 2019

Education

- University of Western Ontario, 1993, LLB
- University of Toronto, 1990, BA

Admissions and qualifications

- Ontario, 1995

Languages

- English